July – August 1957

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The Reformed Journal

A PERIODICAL OF REFORMED COMMENT AND OPINION

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By HENRY STOB

The New Catholic Approach to Protestantism

By LEWIS B. SMEDES

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Evangelism Today

By EUGENE S. CALLENDER

Book Reviews

The Intimate Life

by

J. NORVAL GELDENHUYS

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The Militant Mind (II)

By Henry Stob

THE MILITANT MIND urges the Christian to fight, and so also does the Bible. Both assert that the faithful are of necessity involved in a spiritual war of age-long duration, and both reproach the Christian who refuses to do battle. The Bible and the mind of militancy are undeniably in agreement at this point. But the agreement is not extensive; next to it and interpenetrating it is a very noticeable difference. The difference lies in the fact that, owing to its fuller vision, the Bible embraces vastly more of truth and reality and goes far beyond the militant mind in its representations and injunctions.

The Bible urges the Christian to fight, but it also urges him to make peace; it urges him to destroy, but also to redeem. This the militant mind does not do; it has no taste for paradox. The Bible counsels the adoption of a complex and many-sided attitude toward the world. The militant mind counsels the adoption of a single, simple, and exclusive attitude.

The reason for this difference lies in the different shape the world takes in the eyes of each. The Bible views the world concretely; the militant mind views it abstractly. For the Bible the world is qualified by sin yet constituted by the creative and sustaining energy of God; it resides under judgment yet is the recipient of grace; it is the object of God's wrath but also of his love; it is evil yet in it God celebrates the triumphs of his mercy. For the militant mind the world is the region from which proceed false doctrines, evil practices, dire threats, and subtle temptations; the world therefore reserves only negation and opposition; it must be combatted, and nothing more.

As I have repeatedly said I know of no Christian who articulates this Mind in all its nakedness. But I do believe that it is operative in the Church and that it has left none of us wholly unaffected. I have already cited as evidence of its presence and influence the temptation we are under, when we speak of Church and world, to use terms borrowed almost exclusively from the vocabulary of war. It should be evident that when we yield to this temptation we lose the support of Scripture.

In the view of Scripture the Christian is not simply a soldier, and the Church is not simply a citadel, and the Bible is not simply a sword, and the unbeliever is not simply an enemy. The Bible views these and all things in their full concreteness and requires many words of diverse origins and out of various contexts to name and characterize them. And we require a similar vocabulary if we are to do them justice. In the absence of such a vocabulary we are certain to reduce these things to only a part of what they are, for in the absence of an adequate terminology we lack the tools to grasp them in their wholeness. The result is that a considerable measure of the truth about them eludes our grasp; we retain what is only an aspect or fragment of reality.

What is centrally wrong with the militant mind is that it tempts us, in the supposed interest of Christ's kingdom, to simplify overmuch. It tempts us to turn from a vision of the whole to the contemplation of a severed part. It tempts us to reduce the fulness of concrete existence to the narrow limits of a logical abstraction. It does this because its very genius is simplistic, abstract, reductionistic. I have already suggested how it tempts us to oversimplify the complex doctrine of the antithesis by urging us to construe it in terms of election and reprobation and then to impose that abstract construction without addition upon actual historical existence. It tempts us to do much the same thing in other areas of our theological activity, for example in Apologetics, Dogmatics, and Ethics.

Under the inspiration of the militant mind the Christian apologist or polemicist will sometimes try to reduce a complex of propositions — a given theology or philosophy — to a single principle or set of principles from which it is supposed to be derived by logical consequence. The invariable result is that the theology or philosophy in view is misconceived or misrepresented. Theologies and philosophies, because they are never simple, do not lend themselves to the reductionist procedure. Authentic Reformed theology, for example, is not to be thought of or proposed as a deductive system derived by logical inference from some governing principle, but as a theoretical restatement of the correlated Scriptural givens in their fulness and with paradoxes and mysteries left intact. By the same token no non-Reformed theology or philosophy is reducible to its real or alleged presuppositions. The theology of Reinhold Niebuhr, to take an instance, is no doubt deeply influenced by extra-biblical assumptions, and whoever points this out serves the Christian cause. But not all that Niebuhr says is dictated by these assumptions or even

compatible with them. To suppose that such is the case is to yield to a kind of abstractionism. This abstractionism may serve to sharpen the antithesis by pitting one principle against another, but it is not calculated to do justice either to Christianity or to its rival. The theology of Niebuhr, as is the theology of Calvin, is more than is implicit in a concept, however central. And what is true of them is true of other thinkers and theologians too. Their views do not issue in their entirety from their presuppositions; something of what they say is a reflection of reality as revealed and apprehended. It is therefore not by uncovering some explanatory principle that one is put in a position to understand completely the teaching of a man; it is only when one adds to the conceptual analysis a consideration of the teaching in its existential concreteness that one truly comprehends it. Reductionism is, however, what the mind of militancy recommends, perhaps because men can ordinarily be expected to fight a rival doctrine without reserve only when it is reduced to something simple.

The Christian polemicist who stands under the influence of the militant mind will be tempted not only to reduce a complex body of opinion to a single principle, he will be tempted to perform another closely-related reduction: he will be tempted to reduce a person to the set of opinions that person entertains. It is in the nature of the militant mind to urge the performance of this operation, for under cover of the reduction hostility can be carried over to persons without awakening the conscience. If one first reduces a man to a set of impersonal ideas one can attack him without qualms, for ideas are fair game. It is obvious meanwhile that, though a man may be held accountable for his opinions, he may never be reduced to them. He may never be taken abstractly. But this is precisely what happens when a person is not distinguished from the idea we entertain of him, from the idea which may be thought to control him, or from the opinions that he himself holds. So, for example, when the concrete person Karl Barth is reduced to the doctrine or set of doctrines called Barthianism, he is taken abstractly. When he is so reduced and so taken there is nothing to prevent a man from going after him hammer and tongs, for one may beat and badger an insensible doctrine to one's heart's content, and if it is a bad doctrine one should do precisely that until it dies. But it goes without saying that one may never do this to a person: the law of love prohibits it. A person, therefore, must be carefully distinguished from his opinions. This will be the more readily conceded when it is recognized that the distinction protects us against spurious absolutisms. A principle or idea, at least if it is a simple idea, is either right or wrong, it is either white or black, and one can accept or reject it without qualification. This one cannot do with a person, for a person is in his concreteness always some shade of gray, with possibilities, not closed before the judgment day, of becoming white or black. It should be noted, finally, that the proper exercise of love and hate depends upon observing the distinction now before us. We must hate sin, which is a principle; we may not hate the sinner. We must be militant in the face of evil; we may not be militant in our behavior toward a person. The uncompromising severity that we are obliged to exhibit against evil principles and practices we may not exhibit in our relations to our fellow men. We must destroy an evil thing; we must redeem an evil person.

The dogmatic theologian who allows himself to be influenced by the militant mind is almost certain to develop reductionist habits, and the several doctrines he formulates will quite naturally be weighted on the negative side. This may be observed by considering what happens in the perspective of militancy to the doctrine of God.

In the perspective of the militant mind God is markedly a God of war. He is a terrible avenger who visits destruction on his enemies. He is the God of wrath, whose sword is in his hand and whose very breath destroys. It is immediately to be observed, however, that God is something like this also in the mirror of the Bible. He is a God that has indignation every day (Ps. 7:11). He has garments of vengeance for clothing and is clad with zeal as a mantle (Isa. 59:17). He will come to render his anger with fierceness and his rebuke with flames of fire (Isa. 66:15). Upon the wicked he will rain snares (Ps. 11:6). He will break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel (Ps. 2:9). He will execute judgment by his sword, and the slain of Jehovah shall be many (Isa. 66:16).

But, of course, there is another side to God and this too is illumined by the Scriptures. God appears in the Bible, as he does in the experience of the saints, as merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness (Ps. 103:8). Before men call he answers them, and while they are yet speaking he hears them (Isa. 65:24). He is full of pity (James 4:11), is ready to pardon (Neh. 9:17), his hand is not shortened that it cannot save (Isa. 59:1), and he extends peace like a river to Zion (Isa. 66:12).

It is evident from this that the God of Scripture is a God of double aspect. One side of him is light and cheering, the other is dark and forbidding. On the one side he enchants and captivates, on

ıe other he evokes terror and consternation. This mbiguity presents the biblical theologian with a ery real difficulty. He needs to present a unified icture of God, yet one in which both sides of him ppear, and this is a delicate operation not easy or a theologian to perform. Everything depends ere on the stance he takes and on his angle of ision. If he is under the influence of the militant ind he is apt to place and set himself in such a ay that from where he stands the darker side God either obscures the brighter side or appears ordinate with it. Since he is a Christian, and has ad direct experience of God's saving power, he not likely to allow the obscuration. He is likely, owever, to acquiesce in the coordination; he is apt keep God's grace and judgment, God's love and rath, in the strictest equilibrium; he is apt to ive equal status to God's redemptive and destruc- ve work.

It is plain, meanwhile, that the Bible does not this. In the representation of the Bible the two spects of God do not stand in simple juxtaposition. hey are not on a footing of equality. From the ible's angle of vision God's grace stands in the reground and his judgments in the background. hat is brightly illumined is his love; his wrath es in the shadows, real, unmistakable, and terrify- g, but in the shadows nevertheless. According the Scriptures God is essentially and primarily ıe savior, and only accidentally and derivatively the estroyer. There is a glorious disproportion in is nature and activity; his frown is not in balance ith his smile. When, therefore, a man lays as rong an accent on God's destructive activities as e does on those that are redemptive, the biblical roportion is disturbed, the dark and negative de of God looms larger than it ought to loom, and is love and tenderness is relatively reduced.

That there is no warrant for this reduction is vident from the fact that even Divine Power is an ıstrument predominantly of salvation. It is as tanding in the service of his love that God's mperial might is chiefly celebrated in the criptures. God is all-powerful; none can stay is hand or disturb his designs; what he wills, hat he performs. But this will is asserted and his power is exercised chiefly in the winning and reservation of his own. It is as a loving Father f children that he is a refuge, a fortress, and a igh tower. It is as a tender keeper of sheep that e stretches out a mighty arm and wields a flaming word. There is an enemy abroad in the land and e will not allow the enemy to hurt or to destroy n all his holy hill. He will defend and protect is own. Let the enemy attempt to wrench God's ttle ones out of his strong hands, let him try to rase out of God's palms the names he has written there, let him try to pluck out the apple of God's eye, and God's power to preserve will come immediately into play. This power will keep his children safe. It will also slay the enemy who in madness hurls himself headlong against it. It will do this not because it is designed to kill, but because, being the instrument of an unshakable love, it both cannot bend or break, and must negate its opposite. The enemy who persists in his attempt to frustrate God's beneficient purposes will die in the attempt. He will die, not because God wishes him to die, but because God's purposes of love are sure, and because God will not yield to any onslaught.

The relation of God to sinners, and the effect of his power upon them, can be even more clearly seen when we contemplate not God's concern for his children, but his concern for himself, his infinite concern for his being and status as God. God is God, and there is none beside him. He is the Lord, the Holy One, who cannot and will not share his honor with another. Divinity belongs to him alone, he alone is glorious, he alone is pure, he alone is transcendent over all. No other being participates in the bright and burning glory of his Godhood, he dwells alone on the mount of splendor. And it is his will to maintain his status, to assert and defend his eternal uniqueness, to guard the flaming contours of his exclusive deity. He declares: "I am Jehovah, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another" (Isa. 48:11). But sin, which he did not create, is such a force as moves the creature to challenge his uniqueness. It moves him impiously to ascend the holy hill in an attempt to rob God of his glory. But God will not be robbed; he is the jealous God who takes deity, that is himself, with infinite seriousness, and will not permit it to be profaned, for "how should my name be profaned?" he asks (Isa. 48:11). But the unrepentant sinner, in league with Satan the Supplanter, obstinately pursues his arrogant course, the Holy One meanwhile shouting down to him as he makes his perilous and vain ascent, "woe unto him that striveth with his maker" (Isa. 45:9), and "look unto me and be ye saved . . . for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22). But this warning and invitation goes unheeded: the sinner persists in storming the very throne of God. What happens then is terrible to relate: the sinner breaks himself to pieces on the immovable rock of God's holy determination to maintain himself, and he burns to death at the very feet of God, for "our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29).

But in this burning, in this death, God takes no delight. He has no joy in the destruction either of those who attempt to rob him of his children,

or of those who attempt to rob him of his glory. "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezek. 33:11). The fact is that destruction is not his proper work. He is glorified in it, indeed, for in it he celebrates the triumph of his sovereignty and faithfulness, and vindicates his holiness. But still it is his strange work, for in his proper work he takes great delight. He loves to save.

The Scriptures do not carry us much beyon this point. They do not solve for us the mystery iniquity and the mystery of judgment and perditio In order to stifle all complacency and to drive me into the arms of the Redeemer they open the do upon the mystery, but they leave it in the shado while illumining the face of Jesus. Obedien would seem to require the biblical theologian to the same.

(To be concluded)

The New Catholic Approach to Protestantism

by Lewis B. Smedes

IF PROTESTANTS ever suppose that Catholic theologians do little else than elaborate on official dogma and hurl condemnations at heretics, they may be mildly surprised at many things going on in Roman theological circles these days. With papal infallibility circumscribing all theological reflection, we may wonder whether anything new can come from Rome other than new papal decrees. Yet, Roman Catholic theology is fairly bristling with dramatic vitality and productivity at the present time. There is, for instance, a theological circle centered at Lyon in France whose work has come to be commonly known as "the new theology." Members of this group have been raising surprising questions about things that have always been considered permanently settled in Catholic doctrine and philosophy. Nor has their discussion been bound to the academy; it has had great influence on pastoral work, including the controversial methods employed by the "worker-priests" of Paris. Another "new" thing in Roman theology is the new approach to Protestantism. Brilliant Catholic writers, such as Yves Congar, have entered the ecumenical dialogue by approaching Protestantism in an unusually irenic spirit. They have been trying to break through the caricatures which both sides have often drawn of one another and thus get to the truly basic theological issues which divide Western Christendom. Add to these theological trends the great liturgical movement and the energetic expansion of Catholic biblical studies, and the observer cannot escape the impression that powerful new currents of theological vitality are present in contemporary Catholicism. The thoughtful Protestant will do well to watch the Catholic scene with special interest these days.

Father Louis Bouyer's book, *The Spirit and Form of Protestantism*,[1] is an example of the new, mo irenic Catholic approach to Protestantism. Bouyer study is of more than usual interest to us, sin he was once a Lutheran pastor, who was convert to Romanism, and is now a professor in the Catho Faculty of Theology in Paris. The fact that was not driven to leave the Lutheran Church revulsion against Protestantism nor to join t Catholic Church in a romantic quest for bigne or authority makes it possible for him to write theological book of uncommon objectivity. H conversion to Rome, we are told, did not mean denial of the basic principles of his Protestanti but rather an advance into the Church which alo offered the guarantee and fulfillment of his Refo mation faith. This is what he wishes all Protestan to understand. Hence, his book is not a compilati of Protestant heresies. It is an analysis of t positive principles of the Reformation and attempt to show that these principles are be preserved in the Catholic Church. Since his appe is to those Protestants who seek to remain faithf to the authentic Reformation doctrines and li it is of special challenge to conservative Reform minds.

Bouyer first seeks to assure Catholics that t Reformation was not merely a negative pr test. A Protestant, he says, is not simply a pers who "does not believe in Our Lady, the Saints, t Real Presence, and so on." Nor may the Reform

1. Louis Bouyer *The Spirit and Forms of Protestantis* Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1956. 245

on, contrary to the liberal view, be considered the tory of private judgment over the authority the Church. Though this may have been a result, was never the motive of the Reformation. If a atholic enters into the living religion of the Prostant, he will discover that Protestantism means authentically biblical Christianity. No Catholic ill ever understand the recurring vitality of Protantism until he appreciates this fact. Nor is rotestantism Christian only because it managed carry away a few valuable remains from the nctuary it abandoned. Protestantism is Christian, ost Christian when it is closest to the principles at shaped the Reformation. Is is Christian, "not its departure from the primitive and essential atures of the Reformation, but in its adherence or turn to them." We could not ask for a more mpathetic approach to Protestantism from a atholic theologian.

We find him even more congenial in his analysis the basic principle of the Reformation. The sight of Luther, preserved in the Protestantism ost faithful to its origins, is that "all is grace, id that, consequently, *all* in our salvation comes us by faith. If this *all* is compromised, the very art of Protestant spirituality is wounded." *Sola atia,* says Bouyer, is the basic and positive prinple of the Reformation. No Protestant tuned to e heart of Luther and Calvin would argue with ouyer on this point. But, if the Protestant has en led to believe that this principle was the ief thing that separated the Reformers from ome, he will be surprised to find Bouyer not only derstanding the basic principle of the Reformaon, but agreeing that it is truly Christian. He ys the same for the other principles of the Refor ation — the supreme authority of Scripture and e absolute sovereignty of God. The Reformation, ys Father Bouyer, was rooted in these truly hristian affirmations.

He then argues that these positive Reformation rinciples are not only Christian, but that they are uly Catholic. Luther's basic intuition, and the rotestantism still faithful to it, "so far from being ard to reconcile with Catholic tradition, or incon stent with the teaching of the Apostles, was a turn to the clearest elements of their teaching, nd is in the most direct line of that tradition." dmitting that individual Catholic writers have ot always seen this, he insists that the official and niversal teaching of the Catholic Church upholds e very essentials of the Reformation theology. e cites passage after passage from the Second ouncil of Orange (at which semi-Pelagianism was ndemned) and the Council of Trent to prove at salvation by grace alone through faith is the urest of Roman teaching. Bouyer writes:

> Our final conclusion is that the Catholic not only may, but must in virtue of his own faith, give a full and unreserved adherence to the *sola gratia,* understood in the positive sense we have seen upheld by Protestants. The assertion that, in salvation, all is the work of grace, is neither heretical nor suspect. It is precisely what is affirmed by the genuine Catholic tradition . . . .

The same conclusion is drawn in regard to the authority of the Scriptures. No Catholic theologian, writes Bouyer, "today any more than in the Middle Ages, would place any doctrinal authority on the level of Scripture . . . . The Church in its magisterium is the first to recognize that she is subject to the Word of God as contained in the Bible." As for the sovereignty of God and the *soli deo gloria,* nothing could be more clear than that the Roman Church teaches that God is sovereign over all and that all things must lead to His glory.

Far from separating the Roman and Protestant Churches, Bouyer observes, the positive principles of the Reformation should be the best possible warrant for their return to understanding and unity. Indeed, if these were all of Protestantism, the Reformation should never have become a separate movement, but should have stayed within the Church to become a powerful force for the regeneration of the Church from within. In saying this, Bouyer is not ready to concede that Rome erred in casting the Reformers outside the gates. For, in spite of the truly Christian and Catholic affirmations that lay at its heart, the Reformation was not able to remain true to them. The Roman Church did not reject the Reformation because of its insistence on salvation by grace alone. It rejected the Reformation because the Protestantism to which it gave birth corrupted this Catholic doctrine. There was in the Reformation a "mysterious fatality" by which, according to Bouyer, its positive principles were drawn to adopt a negative significance.

It was not as though the Reformers became too radical, went too far, and carried things to an extreme. It was their failure to be radical enough, their hesitation, their imperfect vision. While they recaptured certain essentially Christian principles neglected in the sick Christendom of their time, they failed to repudiate one of the worst features of medieval Catholicism. It was this feature which, adopted uncritically, became the fatal poison of Protestantism. Bouyer refers to nominalism, the discredited philosophy, born of the diseased womb of a sick mother and reared by Luther as the handmaid to his theology. The one thing Luther should have rejected, he kept; and what he kept from the Middle Ages became the corrupting agent of all the positive Christian principles which the Reformation revived. What could have been the restorative of the whole Church had instead to be rejected

by the Church. For the unhappy alliance of Reformation theology with Occam's ruinous philosophy inevitably led to the negation of all the positive principles of the Reformation. Nominalism had no natural affinity to these Christian principles, nor do the negations of the principles arise naturally from the principles themselves. The tragedy of the Reformation was Luther's forced marriage of nominalism with *sola gratia,* a marriage whose fruits were bound to be bad.

At this point Bouyer's approach ceases to be especially different from most Catholic criticisms of Protestantism. The main difference is that Bouyer views the negations of Protestantism as having no true connection with the positive principles of the Reformation. This, of course, is necessary to his argument that the truly positive principles which were basic to the Reformation are found flourishing in the Roman Catholic Church. The negations that cling to Protestantism as a result of its wedding with nominalism can be disowned only in a return to Catholicism, if not to the Catholic Church.

What are the negations? The first is that the principle of *sola gratia* was perverted into the doctrine of a purely extrinsic justification in which grace remains outside of and changes nothing within the justified sinner. Christ's righteousness is only a cloak thrown over a corpse. Nominalism, the corrupt philosophy, taught that there was no such thing as substance. How, then, could it be otherwise than that the sinner was viewed as substantially unchanged by grace? Secondly, the principle of salvation by faith alone was perverted to the point where works are not only useless for salvation, but are harmful; since faith cannot produce works that merit salvation, faith should not try to produce any works at all. From the positive principle of salvation by faith, the Reformation moved to the negative principle of rejecting all works of faith. Third, the sovereignty of God came to mean the crushing of man; the greatness of God seemed to be sustained only by declaring the nothingness of man. The God of nominalism was "only an inapprehensible proteus" whose sovereignty can be recognized only against the background of man's worthlessness and insignificance. Fourth, the supreme authority of Scripture was carried to an absolute denial of the Church, even as a guarantee that Scripture be maintained for what the Reformation believed it to be. Nominalism could not tolerate any permanent pattern of truth; associated with an insistence on the authority of a book, it led to an arbitrary and unreliable authoritarianism, separated from any guarantee that the truth of the book be given a consistent and universal interpretation. All of these negations are now bound up with Protestantism as an institution. Wherever revi occurs and the negations are overcome, it alwa turns in the direction of Catholicism, if not the direction of the Catholic Church.

It is this negative development of Protestanti which, in spite of its original positive affirmatio forces the Catholic Church to reject the Refo mation. Protestants must now be led to see th the vital principles of the Reformation which th cannot give up are actually brought to full fruiti and maintained in complete fidelity only in t Roman Catholic Church.[2]

A Protestant need not deny his Reformation her age. He ought to seek its fulfillment. He ne deny only himself, not his faith, and come home Rome.

If I have seemed unduly patient in re-producin Bouyer's argument, it is because I consid it important to get the feel of the spirit of curre Catholic polemic. The trend seems to be towa the soft approach. The arguments of Catho writers are not always the same. For instanc Yves Congar, the French Dominican whose boo *Divided Christendom,* was one of the first Catho contributions to the ecumenical dialogue, offe quite a different argument than that of Bouye In his new book, *Christ, Our Lady, and the Churc* Congar discovers the underlying difference betwe Roman and Reformation theology to be their vie on the person and nature of Christ. This is su prising, since in all the controversy Christology w one doctrine on which the Reformers never to issue with Rome. But regardless of the argumen Congar's book breathes the same irenic spirit does Bouyer's book. The echoes of Trent's repe tious anathemas are seldom heard; instead, we a called the "separated brethren." It is my opini that the new approach can be a promising one. do not think we have to suspect Catholic duplici in this. With the new approach perhaps fruitf conversation may be carried on, not in the spi of compromise, but in a spirit that yearns f clear understanding. In this sense, such Protesta works as Professor Berkouwer's *Conflict met Ro* serve a much better purpose than do such attemp as Paul Blanchard's liberally oriented alar Furthermore, conversation with Roman theologia can be more fruitful than shouting protests agai Catholic corruption to fellow Protestants. It necessary to solidify the ranks of the Protesta faithful, but theologically irresponsible charges a

2. At least one Protestant agrees. "It has long seem to me," writes Dr. H. A. Hodges, "and I think histo confirms it, that the Reformation principle of the soverei grace of God is set forth and embodied in Catholic teachi and practice not less truly, and a good deal less abstract than in the Reformation doctrines themselves" (H. Hodges, *The Pattern of Atonement,* London, 1955, p. 10

constant temptation when one knows that his udience is eager to believe the worst. Sober, esponsible, and informed discussion can often serve better purpose in the end than the fanning of ames at home.

How must Father Bouyer be answered? If he id not represent authentic Catholicism, we might ismiss his appeal as unimportant. But he does epresent a truly Catholic approach. Furthermore, e cannot answer him with personal sentiment. It not enough to be able to say that *I* am not in my hristian self what Bouyer says Protestantism is. is not a question of whether I am happier as Protestant than I would be as a Catholic. We ave got to be convinced that the Protestant tradion, the Reformed Church, that nourished us is ie place where Reformation principles in their ue and biblical sense are best and exclusively aintained. It is not first of all a personal quesion; it is basically a question of the Church. The mple fact is that if Bouyer is right, we are duty ound by our own principles to forsake our Protstant home and return to Rome. Is it not a eformed principle that a man seek and join the hurch of purest doctrine?

Our first response is by way of concession. I think that every Protestant whose reading ncludes Catholic books has often been impressed ith the deep spirituality, the humble dependence grace, the profound devotion to our Lord that ermeates much Catholic piety. We may admit iat there is much in Catholicism that offers a rmidable defense against secularism and liberalm. We may concede that many of Rome's severest ondemnations of the Reformation are partly the sult of reaction and are not essential to the mind all modern Catholicism. We may also agree iat Protestants have often caricatured Catholic iety; for example, it is simply not true that atholics remain Catholic simply out of fear and perstition. But, as with Protestantism, the issue not the piety and devotion of Catholics, but the ficial mind of the Catholic Church.

By way of further concession to Bouyer, we may lmit that he has not incorrectly observed many eaknesses in Protestant life. We all know only o well the tendency in many Reformation churches split up into separate federations under the leadrship of strong personalities who impose their iews on their followers. His remarks about rotestant worship are also true in many cases. ouyer rightly points out that, in forsaking a tradition of liturgical worship, Protestant worship as often been subjected to the personal mentality nd devotional direction of an individual preacher. he Protestant worshiper seeking food for his faith often finds it only by subjecting himself to the peculiarities, the hobbies, the momentary disposition of his minister. The success of the worship depends, it almost seems, not so much on the effectiveness of the means of grace, as on the talent of the preacher. However, this frequent Protestant failure is a caricature of a great and true principle — the centrality of the Word of God — which has produced the finest opportunity for a people's encounter with God and grace. And we may add that Catholic worship produces other kinds of failures which are actually more destructive of a people's opportunity for worship than the weakness Bouyer finds in Protestant worship.

There remain, however, the two important issues that Bouyer raises. His appeal to us Protestants stands or falls with these. First, is it true that the Reformation principles of *sola gratia* and *sola fide,* salvation by grace alone through faith alone, are Roman Catholic principles as well? If they are, the chief obstacle to becoming Catholic is removed. Second, have the principles of the Reformation been perverted in Protestantism to a negation of their authentic religious significance? If they have, the Protestant must seek their genuine Christian affirmation elsewhere, probably in the Catholic Church. The important issue is not whether these questions can be answered here and now, but whether Protestantism has the resources to give a satisfactory answer.

Does the Catholic Church teach that salvation is by grace alone? To bring the question to the place where it really matters, does the Roman Church lead its souls to trust confidently that their eternal salvation rests completely in Jesus Christ and in His grace only? Everyone knows that the Catholic Church once officially rejected both Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism. That is, it said an official "No" to those who burdened people with the responsibility of earning or at least partly meriting divine salvation. Father Bouyer leans heavily on this official position. And he quotes at length much of what the Second Council of Orange said when it issued its condemnation. We may, indeed, be grateful that the Roman Church teaches its people that they are justified only because grace was before-hand with their souls. The Catholic is, to be sure, taught the necessity of prevenient grace. It was Trent that said sinners are justified only as they are "disposed through [God's] quickening grace to convert themselves to their own justification by freely assenting to, and cooperating with, the said grace" (Denzinger, *Enchiridion,* 797). This statement, which Bouyer does not include in his many references to Trent, surely teaches the necessity of pre-venient grace. It teaches us that divine grace must precede any

human effort and that any work leading to justification is impossible without the prior work of grace. But the issue is not whether grace is necessary; the issue is whether salvation is by grace *alone*. And Trent teaches that, with the imperative assistance of grace, man then uses his own free will to ascend a prescribed seven-story mountain of virtue leading to his justification. Each step upward requires grace. But each step also requires his own will. "If anyone says, that by faith alone the impious is justified, in such a wise as to mean that nothing else is required to cooperate . . . and that it is not in any way necessary, that he be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will: let him be anathema" (Denz., 802). In the end it is the achievement of inward virtue which brings man's justification. This achievement is never made without grace. But neither is it made without the free disposition of man's will. Grace finds in man a pre-disposition to cooperate; the free-will of man offers congenial territory for grace to work in. Touched by grace, the will of man is prepared to utilize, as it must, the assistance of grace. And thus, it cooperates freely until it brings man to his justification.

Is this *sola gratia?* Even though the theological difference may seem subtle, it is crucial to recognize that this necessity of grace is different from the *sola gratia* as explained even by Bouyer. According to the original Reformation insight, the natural disposition of man is not and cannot be disposed to grace. Grace does not come to congenial territory. It comes to hostile territory. It has to implant a new disposition. But the main point is that man's disposition, even when renewed, does not lead him to justification. For it is the ungodly whom God justifies; and He justifies them by grace when they are ungodly. When grace comes it comes in Jesus Christ. It comes with all of Jesus Christ. It brings the sinner into Christ, so that then and there, without his assistance, without his cooperation, he is justified. He is justified because he is in Christ. And it is grace alone that puts him there. Hence, it is solely of grace; grace is not only imperative, it is exclusive.

The question is whether God justifies sinners as sinners in Christ or whether He justifies men who have been disposed by their wills, with the indispensable help of grace, to move at least partially along the way to inward righteousness. Does God justify sinners by grace alone without any righteousness of their own? Or is justification the climax of a climb upward on the seven-storied mountain of virtue? The Catholic Church teaches that justification is such a climax of interior virtue. The Reformation taught that justification is God's gracious acceptance of sinners.

The role of faith in justification is also impor tant here. According to Rome, faith is the firs step toward justification. It is an assent to th teachings of the Church. Therefore, it must b informed with love and move onward toward th acquirement of other virtues. In other word faith is the beginning of a process in which th believer finally becomes inwardly the kind of per son who is justified in God's sight. It is no wonde that the Council of Trent condemned anyone wh said that faith was the be all and end all of just fication. The Reformation had a different ide of what faith is, and therefore of the role of fait in man's justification. Faith is the subjectiv factor in the incorporation of the believer in Chris Christ is everything in justification. When th believer is "in Christ" he is accepted by God a justified. But faith is only the vacuum that seek to be filled with Christ; it is the subjective appr priation of the Savior. So faith is everythin only in the sense that Christ is everything. Thi the Catholic Church never has understood.

We are tempted to return the compliment Father Bouyer and say that, in spite of its positiv affirmations of the necessity of grace, there is "mysterious fatality" in Catholicism that leads a negation of its affirmations. This negation work itself out in Catholic piety. The Council of Tren had said that, since justification is so closely a sociated with the inward condition of the believe it is sinfully presumptuous for anyone to say wit confidence that he is justified forever (Denzinge 802). The Catholic rarely has courage of fait to say: "There is therefore now no condemnation The alternative is to fear that one is not justifie Such fear can be seen demonstrated every day the holy stairs of the Lateran where one may fin aged women struggling up the stairs on their knee in order to cooperate with grace towards their fin justification. If the Catholic Church believes th it alone is the guardian of *sola gratia*, it should i form millions of its souls that they may cast o their fears and live out their days in full assuran of grace.

We are obliged to answer the second questi as well. Is it true that Luther's pencha for nominalism led Reformation faith to fatal m gations of its own positive principles? We m admit that Luther was too enamored of nominalis for our liking. But Luther's leaning toward C cam, probably in reaction to the moribundity the scholasticism he knew, need not mean that was ruinous of his biblical insights. Was it n just the power of the biblical truth which w able to break through any attachment that Luth had to nominalistic philosophy? But we need n

prove anything about nominalism. We need only show that the negations which Bouyer describes are not real.

Bouyer says that the Protestant affirmation of *sola gratia* was negated into a doctrine of extrinsic justification. To Bouyer this means that grace remains outside of the believer and does nothing in him. This is probably the most important alleged negation, since *sola gratia* is admittedly the basic Reformation principle. The Reformers and those who are faithful to the Reformers' principles do believe that justification is extrinsic. This is their way of saying that it is the ungodly whom God justifies. It is their way of saying that God justifies sinners only on the basis of Christ's righteousness and not on the basis of any inward righteousness of the sinner. But this does not at all mean that the righteousness of Christ by which sinners are justified remains outside of the believer, like a cloak thrown over a corpse.

The righteousness of Christ becomes ours, really ours, because Christ becomes ours. No man, said Calvin, is justified without incorporation into Christ. As a sinner, the believer is incorporated into Christ. And on this basis he is justified. But being thus in Christ, he is really given the grace of Christ. Both extrinsic justification of the sinner and the inward renewal of the sinner are based on his incorporation into Christ. So, extrinsic justification cannot be a negation of *sola gratia* in the sense that Bouyer describes. It cannot mean that grace remains external to the believer. It only means that the sinner is declared righteous on the basis of Christ's — and not the believer's — virtue. But it also means that, on the same basis, the sinner is inwardly changed by the grace of Christ. This is not the teaching of a single Protestant; it is the Reformed tradition, the biblical Christianity. It is all so clear in Calvin that citation seems superfluous. The sentence which follows only typifies his entire approach: "We do not contemplate [Christ] at a distance outside of ourselves, that His righteousness may be imputed to us; but because we have put Him on and are grafted into His body, and because He has deigned to unite us to Himself, therefore we glory in our unity of righteousness with Him" (*Institutes,* III/11/10). Extrinsic justification does not mean nor can it mean that grace remains extrinsic to us. For both extrinsic justification and internal renewal come from the same source — our incorporation into Christ. When Father Bouyer invites us to Rome to escape the negation of *sola gratia* by Reformation theology, we must decline. For when extrinsic justification is understood in the entire context of redemption in Christ as taught in the Reformed tradition that is true to the Reformers, it cannot be disassociated from a real inward transformation by the grace of Christ. Furthermore, the believer need not be told that it is sinful presumption to be confident of his justification. His justification does not rest on his inward transformation. It rests on Christ. If he, in faith, sees Christ as His beloved, he can say: "There is therefore now no condemnation." And he can live in the peace of God.

The other alleged negations of the positive Reformation principles can be answered also. The charge that the *sola fide* was perverted to mean that good works are not only useless for meriting salvation, but are harmful as well, is clearly refuted by Lutheran and Calvinistic creeds and history. Quietists there have been, but they are found in Protestantism no more than in the Catholic Church. The charge that the sovereignty of God has been perverted from its original Christian *soli deo gloria* principle to involve the negation of man is also simply untrue. Bouyer writes that "the God of Calvinism and Barthism . . . keeps all His greatness only if His creatures return to nothingness." This is no more helpful to mutual understanding than is the vulgar Protestant charge that all Catholics put the saints in the place of God. Neither is true. Indeed, when it is said that natural man is a futile enemy of God, unable to please Him, it is paying natural man a high compliment. To be an enemy of God, even a futile enemy, is not to be a nothing. To be held by the absolute sovereign Deity as a responsible enemy is surely to be a something. Finally, the charge that the supreme authority of the Scriptures has been negated in Protestantism to the absolute denial of the authority of the Church is a charge to which no responsible Protestant will plead guilty. The question is what *kind* of authority are we asked to affirm. An ecclesiastical authority which has no room for self-criticism, for confession of error, for appeal beyond itself is the kind which the Protestant faithful to the positive affirmations of the Reformation surely rejects. But he does not deny authority to the Church. Bouyer is saying: Protestants reject our kind of authority, which is the only real kind, and therefore they reject all Church authority. Any fruitful discussion of Church authority must deal with the *nature* of the Church and the *nature* of its authority. This is a point where Protestants and Catholics understand each other perhaps the least, and where they have to start on the right basis if discussion is to be fruitful.

Bouyer's book is a not unwelcome contribution to the continuing conversation. If we do not take up our beds and walk, with the assistance of grace, into the Roman household, it is not because Bouyer and others like him have not helped us to

understand both the Roman Church and our own better. Father Bouyer has lifted — or, better, brought down — Roman Catholic claims to the level where it is possible to converse. For this we are grateful. He has written a better book about Protestantism than many converted Catholics write about Romanism. He has opened the door to discussion a bit wider. We Protestants can contribute to understanding and, prayerfully, to conversion of Catholics only through more patient, informed, and courageous response than we have sometime been able to offer. In order to meet the challeng of the new approach to Protestantism, we sha just have to dig deeper into our own resources an those of the Holy Catholic Church. The new ap proach to Protestantism gives the best promise o fruitful discussion from the Roman Catholic sid since the Vatican Council declared the pope to b infallible. It bears watching, just as it challenge thinking.

Palm Sunday in Rome

by Calvin Seerveld

URCHINS WERE EARLY on the streets hawking sprigs of laurel. Outside the place of worship at Sant'Anselmo dell'Aventino the monastery of monks (more than 150 Benedictine specialists in Gregorian song and liturgy) chanted and processed and got their palms blessed by the abbot. He is a squatty person and his chief attendant was a long bean-pole fellow without much hair. The abbot sat on his throne and the chief attendant kissed his hands before and after he had to hold something, the Bible, staff, or instrument for sprinkling water. If you did not know the abbot represented God you might smile at such serious obsequiousness.

The Gospel reading in the mass for Palm Sunday was Matthew 26:36-27:52. Like the passion from St. John (chapters 18 and 19) on Holy Friday it was sung by three soloists. Evil, *i.e.*, Judas, Pilate, is always sung by the high tenor. The thought seems to be: to be genuine, intensive, profound, the voice must be a deep one. Consequently the *Resurrexi* Easter morning mass is very low pitched, the most joyful festive day of the Christian year! (What an other world from that of Italian opera where the golden-voiced tenor is the idol of the show.)

On Holy Thursday my wife and I attended mass at San Girolamo, a small parochial church outside the northwest wall of Rome. We were the only foreigners. On this day the high priest performs the foot-washing ceremony after the reading of the Gospel during the regular order of the mass. At San Girolamo they used children, twelve imbecilic children. They were led in by an orderly, quietly clutching on to one another, thick block heads and soft pitiful eyes; they were seated in reserved seats before the congregation. They all wore brand-new heavy overcoats, new long stock ings and new brown shoes, all alike. When th time came and John 13 had been read and the monk were busy chanting antiphonally to one anothe across the apse, the twelve were led forward, si to one side and six to the other side, seated, an ordered to take off their socks and shoes. The did and waited. The high priest who had bee undressed, redressed and aproned, now approache them slowly, flanked by attendants, one to care fo his robes, one to watch his hat, one to hold th towels, one to pass the towels, one to hold the basi of water, and one to instruct the children. Th group stood before the first little boy and solemnl bowed. They knelt; the high priest washed hi feet; they stood, solemnly bowed, and moved o to the next boy, repeating the process.

It is not for me to question why they chose im beciles; it is not for me to judge how much prid this humility belied; but I would tremble to be tha high priest in all his pomp bending and washin an imbecile's foot on Holy Thursday. I am afrai that after all the talk about symbol and memoria service and ceremonial example is said, the logi of Roman thought still means to say: this man i actually substituting for Jesus Christ — and tha is blasphemy. I noticed that the poor fellows ha to put on their socks and shoes and try to tie th laces all by themselves afterwards. It was not a impressive business, this foot-washing ceremony It was grotesque. An example of bad taste and o extremely bad exegesis.

On Holy Friday morning we rose too late t attend the Matin (7 A.M.) at Santa Croce i Gerusalemme, but we went anyhow to see the Cap pella di Santa Elena (the mother of Constantine

ith its most beautiful fifteenth-century mosaic eiling. At Santa Croce in Gerusalemme are also hese famous relics: three pieces of the holy cross, he title, one of the holy nails, two thorns, the fin- er of apostle St. Thomas (the one that pointed) - all incased in hideous gold and silver. Santa lena bought them all from a Jew in Jerusalem in he year of our Lord 326 and brought them to Rome long with several tons of earth from Calvary on hich her chapel was to be built. (It had never truck me before that one factor in the prolificness f relics is Jewish businessmanship.) If the Rev. uardian of the Sacred Chapel blesses your cruci- x before these relics it is empowered with the pecial indulgence "Way of the Cross" and the lenary indulgence *"In articulo mortis"* (grants otal remission of the punishment due to one's sins hich is to be expiated either in this life or in Pur- atory). To get this effect one

> must keep the cross in his hands, meditate on the Passion of our Lord, and say twenty Our Fathers, Hail Marys and Glorys: fourteen to the 14 Stations, five to the 5 wounds of our Lord, and one for the intention of the Holy Father. Those who take part in this devotion even if they are unable to attend the Church can gain the same indulgences by holding the cross. Sick persons unable to recite or accompany even mentally the above prayers may gain this indulgence by touching and kissing the indulgenced cross, provided they have received the Sacrament, or if unable to do this, if they are sorry for their sins and resigned to the Holy Will of God.
>
> That a crucifix might be able of the above indulgences, its Christ must be raised or separable from the cross. Both above mentioned exercises can be repeated as often as it pleases. The Rosaries are enriched by the St. Bridget indulgence, viz., 500 days for each bead.
>
> —The Rev. Guardian of the Sacred Chapel.

his notice reminded me of the *Screwtape Letters.*

We went to mass Holy Friday afternoon at the esu where the Collegium Germanicum priests resided. (They are the best of the young Ger- ans sent to study in Rome. Their vestiment is right red; they are called *i gamberi* [lobsters] by he Italians. For several years after the last war hey wore black like other priests.) The main ltar is bare, completely bare on Friday; its cruci- x has been covered for several days too. No ucharist is blessed on Friday; they blessed nough on Thursday for Friday and brought it in rand candle-incense-chanting hymn procession to a ide altar somewhere after the Foot-washing mass. n Friday afternoon they bring it back again, in rand candle-incense-chanting hymn procession. After the Gospel reading on Friday special prayers re chanted: for the Church, *il Papa,* church office earers, catechumens; for the sorrowful, the Prot- stants, the poor Jews, and the pagans. Then the ross above the altar was uncovered and the more han two thousand people behind us surged forward oward the fence and gate that separates the clergy rom the folk. Two priests firmly held the cross nd Christ on the fence and with the background of monks chorusing antiphonally the mass of people one by one knelt, rose, kissed a foot or knee, and walked away with a serious expression. Everyone knelt — those with arthritis and those without arthritis, those tourists with cowboy hats and cameras and those wrinkled Italian grandmothers with black lace shawls, little girls and portly Germans — but the Germans did not kiss the Christ, they just bowed. When the prescribed antiphonies were about run out, the pilgrims were shunted off to a side altar where there was another crucifix, and the mass continued.

I remembered when Moses was commanded to raise up a bronze serpent on a cross so that all who looked upon it would be saved. Years later Hezekiah broke it in pieces because the people were worshipping it. It is difficult to decide which would have pleased Jehovah this Friday afternoon.

Holy Saturday we went to St. Pietro for the midnight mass because it was held conveniently at seven o'clock in the evening. We were early and found good benches up front inside the choir itself; everyone was quiet, praying intently or studiously reading the liturgy. A few minutes before seven, two scrawny Italian women evidently in from the country walked jerkily down the aisle, neck-stretching, head-turning, gesticulating, whispering excitedly, all the way down front. Of course they could not find a seat. They squeezed in on the bench behind us. At seven o'clock an eighth of a mile away from us at the cathedral entrance, the procession of cardinals and priests began to the accompaniment of the organ. We could see nothing, but everyone stood and turned respectfully. *"Il Papa! Il Papa!"* chattered the two wildly and jumped upon the bench to look out over the crowd. A prim nun behind them said with impeccable love: *"Il Papa non c'e. Il Papa non c'e." "Il Papa non c'e?"* They did not believe it. The old one steadied herself on the bench by sinking her fingers into the thick set neck of the German next to me. He got red but said nothing. Finally the procession approached us; the women got off the bench; and the service began. They continued to talk.

First several long Old Testament prophecies were chanted (Genesis 1, 2; Jonah 3; from Exodus, Isaiah, Daniel . . .) interspersed by a *Tractus.* Then we prayed to the Trinity, Mary three times, all the known angels, patriarchs, prophets and thirty odd saints in a long singsongy dialogue with the head chanter. That finished, the principal ritual of the day unfolded: the blessing of the baptismal water. The high priest made many mysterious passes with his hands above the fount of water and in the water and made the motions of the cross with the huge Easter Candle above the water and in the

water, simultaneously chanting directly to the people for the reconsecration of their baptismal vows: "Do you believe in Jesus Christ?" (*Credimus*), etc. "Do you renounce Satan?" (*Renunciamus*), his voice rising with intensity until suddenly the Holy Spirit entered the water before him and it became regenerative. After a short coda of prayers and Amens everything happened. The thousands of electric candles and hidden lights flashed on in a bewildering dazzling glory illuminating the gold, silver and baroque wonders of St. Pietro; the *Gloria* began and the Sistine Cappella choir took up the crescendoing line and soared while the full organ thundered; scores of priests took up large round sponge balls on sticks and dipped them into the Holy Spirit water and walked quickly up and down the aisles shaking them out over the fortunate persons with aisle seats; many a pilgrim headed for the confessionals so that they could be ready to take communion shortly; you felt an unrest and expectancy in the crowd.

We got up then and walked around. The confession closets (Italian, English, German, Hungarian, Czeckoslovakian, Spanish — all of them) were busy. People were kneeling and praying everywhere and the Sistine Cappella choir continued to soar. Squads of nuns moved into line for communion. Tourists began examining paintings seldom seen so well lighted; over in a darker nook a woman was covertly stealing holy water out of a basin, dipping her bottle in carefully. The central ceiling was splendid, magnificent. Back in a side corridor three guards talked quietly around a table, marking time. We gradually wandered back and out, coughing in our colds. It was eleven o'clock.

Easter morning mass in Sant'Anselmo was subdued. The intonation of the *Introitus* was profound but nothing was unusual. Only a handful took communion. A Roman Catholic Easter Sunday morning is anti-climax. They focus attention upon the Vigil and not upon the Day of resurrection. The crucifix — which dominates Roman Catholic ceremony — seems a little out of place on Easter morning too.

But at twelve noon there is excitement and suspense again: *il Papa* gives his world-wide international blessing to the several hundred thousand massed under his balcony. He is just a pin point of a white hat in a throng warm with adoration. There is a band, newsreel cameras, and a flock of white doves are set loose at the moment of benediction. Later in the afternoon we went to Vespers in Santa Maria Maggiore because the famous thirteenth-century mosaic celebrating Mary's being proclaimed Mother of God was illuminated. On the way we stopped in at San Giovanni in Laterano; only on Easter Saturday and Sunday are the heads of Peter and Paul kept there exhibited to the public. Incased in silver and propped up in a cage more than thirty feet off the floor above the central altar they looked like two puppets gleaming in the sunlight. Groups of pilgrims sang hymns there under the heads.

This forced itself upon us the whole week: the crowds, the show, the relics — what did it have to do with the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord? I think we understand it now. It is the Romanness of Roman catholicism. Rome is made out to be the center of Christianity. Rome is the second Jerusalem, the home of Christendom, the Pilgrim City. Out of this Romanness come the original priceless relics, the established folk traditions and the finest ecclesiastical spectacle, the tribute-bearing worshipprs. This Romanness, this centralization at Rome and subordination of all to Rome, the Eternal City, this is what distracts the believer from seeing his Lord. It is exactly this Romanness, too, imposed upon the Catholic faith, that separates us Christians into Roman Catholics and Protestant Catholics. I suppose we Protestants can only go on protesting. . . .

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The World Alliance of Reformed Churches

by M. Eugene Osterhaven

HAVING RECENTLY RETURNED from the annual meeting of the North American Area Council of the Alliance of Reformed Churches Throughout the World Holding the Presbyterian Order, I have thought that there will be *Journal* readers who would be interested in a word about the body that bears that formidable name. The name may indeed be a jaw-breaker but it describes briefly a fellowship of some significance. Two shorter authorized forms of the name are: *The World Alliance of Reformed Churches* and *The World Presbyterian Alliance.*

To mention simply that The Alliance is the oldest existing ecumenical body, having had its origin in 1875 when its first constitution was adopted, is sufficient to indicate that it is of some consequence. That impression is deepened when one learns that The Alliance is composed of 67 member Churches — 11 in North America, 7 in Latin America, 7 in the British Isles, 21 in Europe, 10 in Africa, 8 in Asia, and 3 in Australasia — more or less Reformed in doctrine and Presbyterian in government. Some of the constituent Churches are as conservative as, let us say, the Presbyterian Church of Mexico, while others — for example, certain union bodies or the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. — may be less consciously Reformed than the ecclesiastical fellowship to which we may be accustomed. It has been interesting, however, to hear the highest officials of constituent union bodies insist that their respective communions are becoming increasingly oriented in the Reformed direction, thanks, in large measure to the current theological revival.

There is in The Alliance, then, a considerable spread of member Churches and that spread is geographical as well as otherwise. At the meeting of the General Council every five years one may find an elder representative from the Church of Scotland, or its sister Church, The United Free Church of Scotland, sitting next to a representative of any of the three Presbyterian denominations, all very conservative, of Brazil. A member from the Reformierter Bund für Deutschland, or from the Ev. Ref. Kirche in Nordwestduetschland, consorts with someone from the Gefedereerde Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerke with its four constituent Synods, or with someone from its sister van Africa. A Hungarian Reformed elder communion, the Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk shares a room with a Presbyterian from New Zealand. Before the sessions are concluded men know that they have been participants in an *ecumenical* gathering, geographically at least, second to none! Representing inclusive membership of over forty million, about one-third of whom are on this continent, the delegates would be, ethnically, evangelical Christianity's best representation of the Church Catholic and, although hardly including *"every* nation, kindred and tongue," the gathering would be such that the hyperbole would not be without foundation if employed to describe it.

The Alliance is dissimilar to many interdenominational organizations in that it is a confessional body. Its revised *Constitution,* adopted at the 17th General Council, meeting at Princeton in 1954, allows membership to "any church which accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, which holds the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the supreme authority in matters of faith and life, whose doctrinal position is in harmony with the consensus of the Reformed Confessions, and whose polity is in accord with the Presbyterian order. United Churches which have retained in their faith, life and government a sufficient and substantial part of the Reformed heritage, and Reformed bodies within an association of Churches formed on interconfessional lines, may likewise be eligible for admission."

The purpose of The Alliance, as set forth in its *Constitution,* is to deepen fellowship between constituent Churches and to unite their forces in common service wherever needed; to commend the Reformed Faith and rightly to order the worship of God; to promote common study of the Faith and its implications and to disseminate information; to further intercourse between the constituent Churches and to assist those needing aid; to commend Presbyterian polity; to study what unions or reunions of the Church appear to be the will of God; and to promote and defend religious and civil liberty wherever threatened.

The Alliance in no way seeks to be or act as a super-church, as do certain other ecumenical bodies. Nor have I ever felt that the relative small size of

my own communion, the Reformed Church in America with its 210,000 communicant members, is adversely prejudicial to its position in The Alliance. This past year the Chairman, the Treasurer, and the Recording Secretary of the North American Alliance Council were members of the Reformed Church in America.

What happens at annual Area Council meetings? The meeting of this spring will serve as an example. There were reports and greetings, papers and addresses, panel discussions and a communion service, all in less than three days. The 75 delegates present were a fair representation of the leadership of their Churches and seemed to desire to implement the conclusions of a report on "The Reformed Churches and the Ecumenical Movement" adopted at Princeton in 1954. The General Council there declared that there are "at least three reasons which call for a strong and active Presbyterian and Reformed Confessional agency: (1) the need for bearing witness to the basic doctrinal position of the Reformed Churches . . . (2) The need for emphasizing the fundamentals of our Presbyterian polity . . . (3) The need for rendering certain practical services to members of the Presbyterian and Reformed family."

The report of the "Permanent Commission on Civil and Religious Liberty" was addressed to this last need, of helping our brethren in the faith. The carefully drafted section of that report dealing with Hungary was adopted after considerable debate and was sent here and abroad where it might do the most good. A report from the new "Permanent Committee on Theology," with the introduction of the newly appointed theological secretary, Lewis Seymour Mudge, Jr., reflected the deepening interest in this phase of the program.

Meetings of the General Council of The Alliance are similar to, but far more elaborate than, Area Council meetings. The next meeting of the General Council is being planned for Brazil in 1959, the centennial of Presbyterian missionary work in that great country which now includes a quarter of a million Calvinists, and the quadricentennial of the publication of the most celebrated edition of Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion.*

A project of The Alliance almost certain to be of interest to *Journal* readers is the restoration of the Calvin Auditorium in Geneva as an international memorial for the Reformed family of Churches. Built in the first quarter of the thirteenth century and used by John Knox as a church for English-speaking refugees at one time, it became the lecture hall of Calvin and Beza, who spoke to as many as one thousand students at a time from all over Europe. It was here also that the "congregation" was held each Friday morning at 7:00 o'clock when ministers expounded difficult points of doctrine and members from the audience could ask questions or give reply. For two centuries it stood as a center of Christian instruction, the progenitor of the University of Geneva.

For several decades the building has been unused and it is in need of repair. The Alliance is undertaking to create in the historic spot, beside the Cathedral of St. Pierre, a world Reformed Center where there will be worship, lectures, a permanent religious exhibit and a memorial of each member of the Reformed family. Approved by the 17th General Council of The Alliance, the sum of $130,000 of the $148,000 needed for restoration has been contributed. Additional funds will be needed for furnishings. That these funds will be provided is certain because of the interest that has arisen. The people of the city of Geneva are giving $10,000 and the Swiss Government has made a contribution of $18,000 as its pledge of interest and appreciation for the project. Although the project is under the auspices of The Alliance, that of which it is reminiscent and for which it will be a memorial is somewhat broader, for not *all* Reformed Churches are constituent members of The Alliance. Yet all are, spiritually, children of Geneva and heirs of those who once sat in Calvin's famed lecture hall. The Christian Reformed Church is such a fellowship. It, too, looks to Geneva and might well participate in the restoration of the *Auditoire* so hallowed by memory and time.

"When we despise those whom God would have honored, it is as much as if we should despise Him: so it is, if we make no account of the salvation of those whom God calleth to Himself. For it seemeth thereby that we would stay Him from showing His mercy to poor sinners, who are in the way to ruin. The reason why St. Paul useth this argument — 'that God will have all the world to be saved' — is that we may, as much as lieth in us, also seek the salvation of those who seem to be banished from the kingdom of God; especially while they are unbelievers. . . . Therefore, we may be so much the more assured that God taketh and holdeth us for His children, if we endeavor to bring those to Him who are afar off. Let us comfort ourselves, and take courage in this our calling. . . ."

—John Calvin

Evangelism Today

by Eugene S. Callender

WHEN WE LOOK at the field of evangelism in Protestant circles today, we find confusion, both in practice and theology. This confusion is so great that the only wonder is that the churches have gone so long without feeling the need for rethinking and reforming what they are doing in evangelism.

Confusions in practice are the most obvious. Lay people are likely to reject one minister as not being evangelistic because his preaching does not conform to the stereotypes of revivalism, and to welcome another as a true evangelist even when he devotes his entire attention to visiting church members and promoting an annual revival for the faithful. National church bodies make pronouncements about and promote campaigns for "strengthening our spiritual life" and "reaching the unreached," but their major standard of evangelistic depth and effectiveness continues to be the statistics showing the number of conversions, baptisms, and new members.

Some local churches, embarrassed by the necessity of having an "evangelism committee," are now calling it their "membership committee," after the example of other organizations to which members belong. And in many towns the only "mission" serves transient men, while "missions" is an activity supported by local churches but carried on by other people in other places.

Far more serious than such confusion in our practice of evangelism in America are the confusions in theology. Every major denomination has staked its approach to twenieth-century America on a two-pronged attack of church extension and visitation evangelism. Church extension in *practice* is questionable enough with its emphasis on "high-potential" areas in the residential suburbs, but church extension in theory is worse. It is based on the assumption that our churches must "follow our people" as they move out of the cities and off the farms and to the north and west. "Following our people" is certainly not evangelism.

Visitation evangelism, in which lay people go out two by two for friendly visits to make "new friends" for Christ, is chummy but lacks the sense of divine majesty and serious mission that is required for evangelism. This kind of call may seem perfectly proper in a suburban living room, but it is quite out of place in a city apartment house.

The very language we use in our sermons, in our church meetings, and in our denominational literature indicates an inadequate theology of evangelism. For example, we still speak of winning souls, although only I Peter 3:1 gives any hint that a person may be won, and even that passage does not specify to what he is won. As for "soul," a study of the area of that word in the New Testament carries one far beyond the simple stereotypes used in present-day talk about evangelism. Other phrases in common currency in evangelism could not stand theological analysis. To start a list, here are a few: "telling stories of Jesus" to children, "securing decisions," asking people to "accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour" and speaking of social action as social evangelism.

Examples of our present confusion, both in practice and theology, could be multiplied; but it is far more important that we understand the sources of our confusion and begin to find ways of clarifying our conception of evangelism. Much of our confusion in America has been inherited from nineteenth-century revivalism. This has been compounded by the effects of the twentieth century administrative revolution upon the churches.

In many sections of the country, in many denominations and in a significant part of most denominations, the patterns of the nineteenth-century revivalism continue to dominate both serious and superficial thinking about evangelism. The old-time religion "that was good enough for father and mother" is assumed to be the only kind of religion that can effect a valid transformation. Thus, the individual church member is prepared for his assured place in heaven by being bred in gospel singing and testimony, born in an emotional decision, nurtured with selected and interpreted Bible passages, and revived by regular exposure to the message that first brought conversation.

Completely overlooked is the fact that the old-time religion is primarily a product of the nineteenth century and would not have been good enough for great grandfather and great grandmother, not to mention the English independents or Calvin or Luther. Still, those who accept this kind of religion as the only valid form of Christianity are certainly the norm of America's Protestantism in point of numbers if not of influence. Those outside and those inside the churches are most likely to think of evangelism and evangelistic

religion in terms of the stereotypes of behavior and speech of the adherents of the "old-time religion." The positive influence of this group seems to be growing, both in old-line conservative denominations and in the newer sects.

The twentieth-century administrative revolution which has left its mark on business and industry and government, has also made its contribution to the confusion in evangelism. Its office practices, its public relations techniques, its tendency to institutionalize have all become working tools of evangelism. Every denomination has its department of evangelism and every local church is urged to have a committee on evangelism. So evangelism has become a compartmentalized process in the efficient institutional working of American churches.

National offices produce literature on evangelism which, it is hoped will penetrate beyond a pastor's desk. Advertising men donate space and time to urge people: "Take someone to church this week — you'll be better for it." Religious radio and television experts labor over human-interest shows to raise Christianity's rating. And local churches use kits and packages and workshops and other gimmicks to organize their visitation campaigns. The machinery is well-oiled and operating at high speed, but it seems chiefly capable of producing a favorable climate for religion, of promoting an increased interest in sending the children to church school and having one's name on the church roll, and of frustrating ministers who must include evangelism as one more indispensable church activity.

Some would see Billy Graham and his crusades as a throw-back to the days of Moody and Sankey, but he is better understood as a conspicuous combination of nineteenth-century revivalism and twentieth-century ecclesiasticism, the very combination creating our present confusion in evangelism. Billy's messages and the setting in which they are presented are designed to give the appeal of old-time religion. And the organizational skill of his advance men, his public-relations men, and his follow-up team could only be matched in the fund-raising departments of the major industries.

To get beyond our present confusions and establish a firm basis for the work of evangelism, American churches would do well to recognize first that evangelism should never be thought of as only part of the work of the Church. Evangelism is the life of the Church itself. This is very clearly stated in the summary of the Survey on Evangelism made for the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches:

1. Evangelism is the participation of the total Christian community in Christ's mission to the world.

2. Every single aspect of the Church's life and activities is of an evangelistic significance.

3. In proclamation, fellowship and service, the Church must demonstrate the gospel in the actual life and context of men.

4. Laymen are on the front line, served by the ministry whose function it is to equip the people of God for its mission.

5. Laity and ministry together strive to be of the mind of Him who emptied Himself in service to the world.

The whole life of the Church is evangelism. It cannot be cubbyholed into a national secretary's office or a local church committee. It cannot be guaranteed by inter-agency conferences. And it cannot be started — or stopped — by the adoption of a denominational program of emphasis.

If we are to rid ourselves of the current confusion in evangelism, we must recapture the meaning of three New Testament words.

1. *Kerygma* — the proclamation of the divine events which have brought redemption to the world. This work of proclamation involves not only preaching but also teaching.

2. *Koinonia* — the transfer of loyalty from one community to another. Here it is recognized that all personal decisions have a social context.

3. *Diakonia* — service to the whole life.

This approach can have two possible fields of emphasis. A comprehensive approach through social action would aim at remaking the total community. A more personal readjustment could be made through the use of psychotherapy and counselling.

Kerygma, koinonia, diakonia — proclamation, fellowship, service — these are the key words of the work of evangelism as described in the New Testament. As the Church turns out to the world, its proclamation and its fellowship finally express themselves in service.

Saying that American churches must go beyond the stereotypes of revivalism and gain a sense of the wholeness of the Church's mission is not the same as actually beginning the process of reformation and renewal. This process will require new concepts of what the church is doing in its proclamation of the gospel, its life of fellowship and its service to the world.

The most obvious place to begin will be with the pastor's sermons, and orders of worship. Some ministers will have to give their favorite cliches a rigorous analysis through Bible study and theology. Others will have to take more seriously the dogmas of our present culture. More serious is the fact that we are relying on the church extension and visitation programs to do the largest

part of our work of proclamation. However, the atomization of American society and institutions, and the religious indifference of great groups of our population mean that we must meet popular culture and the opinion molders *on their* territory *with our message.* This means greater, rather than less reliance on broadcasting, films, newspapers, and magazines. But it also means that technical gimmicks and popularity appeals should not be allowed to take the place of direct confrontation between the wisdom of our culture and the scandal of the gospel.

If the entire life of the Church has evangelistic significance, the fellowship of our churches must be strengthened and redirected if it is to go beyond caring for its own and picking up those new members who are most attracted to the Church as an institution. If Christ accepted the limitations of human life in the Incarnation, the Church as the body of Christ must also accept limitations. It must be willing to become indigenous and share fully in the frustrations and predicaments of being the Church of a particular group of people in a particular time.

There are dangers in such a procedure. The experience of African churches that have been led back into witchcraft with a Christian flavor by their lay teachers can be matched by the environment as to be virtually indistinguishable.

We must rely on the grace of God and the discipline of life in a larger fellowship than the local church to forgive and correct such abuses.

There is one more New Testament word that the Church must recapture in its evangelistic task: *Martyrion* — martyrdom — the limiting concept of evangelism. When the gospel must be proclaimed with no hope of tangible results, this is the only possible form of evangelism. Today, statistical measures of progress and continous emphasis on success have left no room for *martyrion,* no comprehenion of the possiblility of defeat. Yet the meaning of the Cross of Christ does not gain victory in our terms, but in God's. The world counts it defeat, God makes it victory.

If we take the atonement seriously, the Church's prime concern should be to make Christ's witness in its time. Not numbers or wide influence or good fame, but being faithful is the Churches responsibility. If Christ is to be rejected by the twentieth-century or in any part of America or the world, then the Church must expect to be rejected also. And if Christ is accepted, then the victory will be His not ours.

BOOK REVIEWS

Two reviews of —

ALL YE THAT LABOR: *An Essay on Christianity, Communism, and the Problem of Evil.* By Lester DeKoster. 128 pp. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956. $1.50.

I

By JOHN C. BENNETT, Professor of Christian Ethics, Union Theological Seminary.

This is an excellent book about Communism and about the general direction in which Christians should move in finding an alternative to Communism. Professor DeKoster gives a great deal of space to a very objective summary and interpretation of Communist theory. He is wise in recognizing that behind the present power of Communism there is a movement which had its origin in Marx's justified indignation against the cruelties of mid-nineteenth-century capitalism and which is governed by a pretentious and at times plausible philosophy. The tragedy of Communism is that it is not, as many Americans assume, a kind of large-scale gangsterism but an idealistic movement to which many sincere persons have been deeply committed because it promised to deliver humanity from all forms of social evil but instead made these persons instruments of tyranny. The philosophy of Communism has provided a rationalization for all of the terror and oppression which accompany the revolution. If it were not for the sincerity of the commitment of many Communists and for the fulness of their rationalization of all that they do, Communism would not begin to be as difficult a problem as it is. This book will give its readers a good understanding of the reasons for the power of Communism over the minds and souls of many people as well as a careful and convincing criticism of Communism from a Christian point of view. There are a few references to the present appeal of Communism to the colored races and to those new nations which harbor resentment against Western imperialism but, in the present situation, it would have been helpful if the author had given more attention to this. One of the extraordinary things about the history of Communism is that it has had least success in the countries in which Marx and Engels expected revolutions against Capitalism and has had its great triumphs and its major attraction in nations that have never had much experience of Capitalism, in Russia and China and other countries where feudalism and agricultural economies have remained dominant.

I have been very much interested in what Professor DeKoster has said about Capitalism. My almost complete agreement with it is some indication that our traditions are coming closer together. I come out of the liberal Social Gospel tradition and I used to call myself a "Christian Socialist." Today I find myself recognizing as Professor DeKoster does the values in the pluralism and in the self-correcting elements in Capitalism in the context of political democracy. I welcome as he does the changes that have come in Capitalism under the influence of the Christian faith and the democratic spirit.

Indeed I am sure that Communism completely failed to understand the dynamics of democracy, regarding it as nothing more than a facade for the exploitations of Capitalism. We have seen the capacity of the democratic state to change the economic institutions in the interests of the vast majority of the people. I am sure that there was a very powerful Christian influence in all of this, but I have noticed that a large proportion of Protestants resisted most of these changes as long as it was possible to do so.

I have no important criticisms of this book but I do wonder if in the closing pages there are not hints of positions which I would criticize if they were developed. I cannot believe that the author really means that Protestants in their programs for social reform always stop short of coercion (p. 120). On page 114 there is a summary of many measures which are approved by the author which do involve some degree of coercion. The rule of law does have a background of coercion, but of course, the healthier the society, the more law does rest upon consent. I mention this because it seemed that, for a moment, the author was drawing back into a purely voluntarist view of social reform. In the final pages that deal with the Christian statesman's responsibility for agricultural surpluses, there seemed to be a short-cut in the argument that did not allow for the statesman's function as a trustee for the national interest. I agree that the Christian statesman should seek to educate the public so that it would accept just such a program, but my guess is that there will always be a lag here and that what we succeed in doing in this way will not solve the problem of the surpluses. But all the pressure in this direction will be to the good so long as it also takes account of the danger of dislocating the economies of other countries.

Professor DeKoster has written a very clear, persuasive, and soundly Christian book.

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II

By KENNETH E. BOULDING, Professor of Economics, University of Michigan.

This is a serious and well-informed study of the Marxist "faith" from the standpoint of Reformed Protestant Christianity. It deals with the deeper philosophical and theological issues rather than with current politics. It is irenic rather than polemic in tone; the author seeks to understand and to see what truth can be gleaned from Marxism rather than seeking for small debating points on trivial issues. Perhaps because of this his criticism of Marxism is all the more devastating. If, as Toynbee has suggested, Marxism is a "Christian Heresy" — a philosophy which reflects in obverse, almost like a plaster impression, the lineaments of the Judeo-Christian faith out of which it grew — then it really takes a Christian to criticize it. It is stretching language too far perhaps to call Marxism a "religion," as it does not encompass those devotional practices which are the core of the religious experience — a religion without God is hardly possible. Marxism is, however, a "faith," in that it gives its followers an interpretation of history, a theory of the nature of man, of the nature of evil, and of the role of the individual in the great drama of history. In some ways indeed Marxism is a kind of parody of Calvinism — its insistence, for instance, on the nature of freedom and of salvation as "co-operation with necessity" reminds one of Calvin. In its followers also it produces a puritan fanaticism reminiscent of the "unco guid," without the tempering of the grace and sweetness of New Testament religion.

It is impossible in a short review even to outline the rich argument of this compact work. After a chapter on the nineteenth-century setting there is a brief account of the main tenets of Marxist philosophy, which does not get into some of the subtleties of Marxist value theory but which nevertheless strikes this reviewer as a fair and accurate summary of the materialist view of history, the theory of class struggle, and of the "eschatology" of the revolutionary hope. This continues with discussions of the Marxist theory of man as determined in his ideas and character by the means of production, the Marxist theory of evil as "social," and created by the "fall" from primitive communism, the Marxist attitude to history and the "dialectical process," and so on. The author is at his best in pointing out the curious disassociation of the Marxist from historical reality, and his inability to demonstrate the necessity of his "utopia" of th classless society because this inevitabl lies beyond history. From this philo sophical root, and also from the Marxis attitude towards "negation" as a essential and positive aspect of th dialectical process, follows the irrespon sible attitude of the Marxist toward history and towards his own time an fellows. The disruptive and corruptin effects of Marxism are shown ver convincingly to follow from its basi philosophical tenets. There is a cor cluding chapter in which it is show how Christian thought and influenc has modified capitalism realistically a way from the *laissez faire* position o the classical economists. The treatmen here is sketchy and open to som criticism (Adam Smith did not, fo instance, hold that *laissez faire* woul result in more equal distribution), an one hopes the author might expan this in another book.

The style is colloquial, occasionall perhaps too much so, but the book i readable, and could be read with prof it by the layman. It deserves to b widely read, and to be taken seriousl far beyond the constituency to whic it is primarily addressed. It does no deal with the technical economics o Marxism: the importance of Marx as figure however lies not in his technica economics, which is no advance o Ricardo, but in the "faith" of whic he is the prophet. It is to the under standing criticism of this faith tha the book is primarily, and very suc cessfully, directed.

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OVE IN THE WESTERN WORLD. *By Denis de Rougemont.* New York: Pantheon, 1956, $4.50

eviewed by RODERICK D. JELLEMA, *structor in English, University of aryland.*

Books dealing with "Western civiliation" and "Occidental culture," many them under terrifyingly broad titles, ave been swelling the publishers' catagues for the past several years. They e interesting manifestations of our rowing, self-conscious conviction that l is not well. "We who dwell in the estern world," writes M. de Rougeont, "are destined to become more id more aware of the illusions on hich we subsist."

The day in which we could blissfully id complacently assume the sole *fferentia* of Western civilization to be hristianity — that illusory day has assed. Along with it has passed the pposite illusion: that the Church can nore the civilization which is its ontext. As the analysis of the structre of the West continues, the Church nds its plight not necessarily more esperate but more boldly and more acidly exposed. If we are to address, y claim to, work significantly within e world in which we live, our job egins with understanding it.

De Rougemont's *Love in the Western Vorld* is a significant book; it is a ind of history of the decline and fall f the concept of love in Western ivilization. It is a startling study, ffering far more than its title promises. or the concept of love, as the author hows, has affected far more than the nstitution of marriage: since its birth n the twelfth century, it has determined o a large extent the Western tone and hape of literature, mysticism, and warfare as well. And this concept of ove — this is one of the main theses f the book — has been spawned not by hristianity but by the Manichaean eresy.

In the Graeco-Roman world passionte love was regarded as a frenzy, an berration. ("Those who are in love," rites Plutarch, "must be forgiven as hough ill.") In the Orient it is still o regarded. Only in our own civiliation is *passion* (not the satisfaction f love, but the suffering from it, the cstacy of unfulfillment, "being in love with love") considered an end in itself, value which gives life significance. The myth is peculiarly our own. One nly need consult *Romeo and Juliet*, or *Anna Karenina*, or the novels of Hardy, or his own throbbing little Western twentieth-century psyche to find it.

It is a stranger myth than we realize. For passion is torment; to satisfy it is to degrade it and lose it; its culmination is not, cannot be in this life; it finds perfection ultimately only in death (in a Wagnerian *Liebestod*, for example, or in the tomb in which Romeo and Juliet perfect their love in death). It must thrive on obstacles (hence the "love triangle" of popular fiction). If we in the twentieth century can no longer tolerate the death-wish which is integral to passion, our novelists and TV writers oblige by tacking on the happy ending: the passionate lovers are finally united, but never in the real world they are defying and fleeing, always in a cheap "poetical" atmosphere of sentiment and sunsets and eternal rose petals. We leave them there and quickly forget them while the inevitable commercial finishes the show. We are satisfied by this or by the more substantial tragic ending (who of us would delight in seeing Mr. and Mrs. Romeo Montague — doing dishes?) because either of them satisfies our own deeply ingrained belief in passion. But the conflict between anarchic, unappeasable passion and morally and socially responsible Christian love puts us in an impossible position; it makes of Western man a confused and sick schizophrenic; he cannot feel fated to escape the physical world (this is the essence of passion) and still be expected to embrace it.

M. de Rougemont's job is to account for this characteristic. The entire myth of passion, he argues, rises out of the dualistic metaphysics of the Manichaeans, an heretical sect who believed that good and evil were of equal ultimacy; that all things physical were evil; that being alive in a body was absolute woe; that death — a return to the One-ness of spirit and identity with that spirit — was the ultimate good in life. This heresy was elaborated upon and related to marriage (a state of "legal fornication," allowed the Cathar Believers but not the Pure, the Elect) by the Cathars; from there it drifted by way of Troubadour love poetry (a disguise, de Rougemont suggests, for suppressed Catharist mysticism) into the convention of "Courtly love." The interesting paradox, as the author suggests, is that passionate lovers, like drug addicts, many be mystics unawares.

The theory gives an interesting twist to church history. For the Catholic Church, in an effort to suppress the heresy of Catharism, forced it into other forms — and ironically had its own mysticism burrowed into by courtly rhetoric, thus intensifying out of Biblical proportion the conflict of spirit and matter.[1]

But *Love in the Western World* is not a mere chronicle of historical data. It is at the same time a strong piece of Christian apologetic. The thing that was by-passed, according to de Rougemont, is the true Christian concept of love of *Agape* rather than *Eros*. For *Agape* rescues *Eros;* Christianity really breaks down the pagan metaphysical dualism (and eschatological monism) which gave rise to our nation of passion. The Incarnation, with all its implication of a loving God who redeemed man by becoming flesh, has broken the circle. Life for the Christian is not a frightened lunge toward death — at least not in the old, other-worldly sense: "Death, from being the last *term*, is becoming the first *condition*. What the Gospel calls dying to self is the *beginning* of a new *life* already *here below* — not the soul's flight out of the world, but its return in force into the midst of the world . . . . Love now still begins beyond death, but from that beyond it returns to life." And love, as defined by Christianity, brings forth the *neighbor*. Love is for the world, the physical world. "To love God is to obey God. who has commanded us to love one another."

The book is stimulating and incisive; it lends perspective, and carries that perspective into contemporary application. Even if de Rougemont's view of Romanic literature is dismissed for lack of convincing scholarship (he seems, for example, to play down the influence of Neo-Plantonism; and to grub out Catharist traces in Milton's *Il Penseroso* seems a little far-fetched), it still serves as excellent illustration of his critique of contemporary ethics. The book might serve as a good corrective to the confused modern tendency to berate the Enemy while feeding on his work.

1. The Catharist-Courtly passion for virginity may also account for Maryolatry. The Church attempted to harness Courtly love: it is in the twelfth century that Mary is first called "Queen of Heaven," and orders of monks become, in Courtly fashion, "Knights of Mary." Bernard of Clairvaux, who fought against the Catharists, also protested the untraditional exaltation of Mary.

THE THEOLOGY OF CALVIN. *By Wilhelm Niesel, translated by Harold Knight.* 254 pp. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956. $4.00.

Reviewed by JAMES DAANE.

Is there in Calvin's theology some single "fundamental principle" or "central doctrine" which dictated the terms of the remainder of his theology? Was the "sovereignty of God," or perhaps the "honor of God," so predominant in Calvin's mind that it determined both the material content and the structural form of his theology? Or was his theology determined in content and structure by his notion of the "laws of thought," or perhaps by his French mentality, or his legal training?

Most recent researchers into Calvin's thought, declares Wilhelm Niesel, have sought for such a single regnant factor as will account for the peculiar form and content of his theology. In the judgment of Niesel, they not only have failed, but some have been quite ridiculous in failure. No "central doctrine," no private conception of logic, nor desire for system provides the clue, and least of all does some psychological feature of the French mind provide it. In creating a theology, Calvin had but one desire — the creation of a theology which both in form and content would be a witness to God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Calvin's profound and simple concern for a theology which would be nothing more, and nothing less, than a witness to God as revealed in the flesh, accounts for the material content and the structural form of Calvin's theology and provides the indispensable key for its understanding. This is Niesel's thesis.

Calvin, says Niesel, was far from wanting a theology of God-as-he-is-in-himself. He regarded such a God as an idol, the God of the Jews and Turks, the God of abstract, medieval scholasticism. A theology which seeks to be a theology of God-in-himself apart from his self-disclosure in Christ, is but metaphysical speculation. At every point in Calvin's presentation of every doctrine, we are confronted with the material and formal principle of his theology: God as revealed in Christ. No truth about God as he is in himself, no selected truth about God as revealed in Christ, no peculiar logic, or desire for system, but Jesus Christ himself determined the content and structure of Calvin's theology. Calvin's single concern — whatever the dictates of logic or the demands of system may seem to demand — is the presentation of the Biblical truth about God as revealed in the flesh. He desired and produced a theology of revelation. His point of theological departure is not the sovereignty of God, or the honor of God, but Jesus Christ. To be sure Calvin was concerned about the honor of God. But not in the abstract, apart from Christ. "If only people had heeded the fact that it is a question of the honour of the God who in Jesus Christ has disclosed to us the depths of his mercy!" Calvin would have regarded a theological preoccupation with the sovereignty of God defined in terms other than his sovereignty revealed in Jesus Christ, as theological speculation and idolatry. Calvin's theological method is determined by his point of theological departure: Jesus Christ, as the self-revelation of God — who is also the determinative form and content of his personal religious faith.

Niesel does not give a survey of the whole of Calvin's theology. Rather, he presents in the sequence of the *Institutes*, some of Calvin's more important doctrines to illustrate that the whole of Calvin's theology is everywhere shaped by the principle of God revealed in Christ. Election is one of these.

A theology of revelation understands election as a divine action that takes place "in Christ" and which must be understood only in terms of Christ. Accordingly, Calvin taught that Christ is the "mirror" of our election. It is just in his doctrine of election, contends Niesel, that Calvin shows that he is not a speculative thinker. Christian theology (in distinction from the theology of Jews and Turks) knows nothing about an "eternal election" apart from its revelation in Christ. Such a theology is not in part a theology of revelation and in part a theology of metaphysical speculation. It knows nothing of an eternal election except as revealed in the time and flesh of Jesus Christ. Hence, argues Calvin, we can have no assurance of our own election by looking at ourselves, nor even by looking at God the Father in so far as we think of the Father apart from the Son. Christ alone is the sole source of our knowledge and assurance of election; He is the only mirror of election — indeed, Calvin goes so far as to say that Christ claims to be the Author of our election ("I know whom I have chosen"). Any thought abo predestination *as such*, as a notion r garded apart from Christ, can only lea to the assurance of damnation, for wh destiny can a man concerned about h sin conceive of apart from Christ, e cept a destiny of damnation? T imagine, therefore, that Calvin's do trine of predestination is his centr doctrine and point of departure whi determines, and is therefore the cl to the understanding of all his oth doctrines, is not to give evidence understanding Calvin, but to reveal fascination for abstract speculation. is to deny the distinctive characterist of authentic Calvinistic theology. Nies admits that in his polemical writin about predestination Calvin was not a ways completely true to his basic theo ogy, but urges, and I think quite righ ly, that the authentic features of Ca vin's theology should be sought for n in those argumentative writings which he defended his position agai his opponents, but rather in those wr ings in which he simply presented h theological positions, as, for instanc in the *Institutes*.

Niesel finds considerable support f the thesis that Calvin's theology is so ly a revelational theology of God r vealed in Christ, in the fact that Calv understood many Christian doctrin in terms of the Chalcedonian formula the divine and human natures in Chris Christ, according to Chalcedon is th union but not the fusion of the divi and human; the union of the divi and human which is Christ necessitat distinction, but disallows separation. is in terms of this Chalcedonian do matic definition of Christ, urges Niese that Calvin understood that Christ God's Word, and the Bible as God Word, are united but not identical, di tinct but not separated. In a simil fashion, says Niesel, Calvin understoo that Christ is physically present in Ho Communion, united with the bread an wine, yet not identical with them, di tinct but not separated from them. is according to the same Chalcedonia formula, contends Niesel, that Calv understood the relation between the d vine Word and the human word preaching, between justification an sanctification, between faith and hop between Christ and the members of h Body — indeed, Calvin is said to ha worked with the same apparatus ideas in his formulation of the doctri

the Trinity. Thus Calvin's whole ology is said to turn solely on God's elation in Christ.

s Calvin's theology as Christo-centric Niesel, with considerable sympathy l respect for Calvin, seeks to prove? esel speaks of a "revolution" in our derstanding of Calvin brought about recent theological research into lvin. He also expresses the judgnt that continued research (his work peared in German in 1938) has not termined but rather reinforced his sis. Whether Calvin is these days ng read too much in the eyes of rth (Niesel studied under Barth) and terms of the categories of contempoy theology, must be left to the judgnt of professional theologians. One ng, however, is certain. The right swer will not be obtained by merely oting subsequent Calvinists, for re- t studies of Calvin have made it all plain that many Calvinists since lvin have done unto him whatsoever y will, in the interests of their own vate theologies. It is incontestable t many latter day Calvinists have ndered far from the Christ-centered- ss of Calvin and of Biblical theology, wn the road of abstract, theological culation. The result has been that lvinistic theology has become static d sterile, and in the area of the prac- al life of the Reformed Churches, visive. Few things are more needful r the health of Reformed theology an a serious return to the study of lvin himself. Niesel's book, in the perb translation of Harold Knight, ay help pave the way for such a re- rn for English students, as the origil German is said to have provided a w and revolutionary approach to Cal- n for German students.

HE EPISTLES OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries) *By Leon Morris.* 152 pp. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957. $2.00.

eviewed by OTTO A. PIPER, Profesr of New Testament, Princeton Theogical Seminary.

Dr. Morris, Vice-Principal of Ridley ollege in Melbourne, Australia, has ritten a very solid and useful comentary on Paul's Letters to the church Thessalonica. His work, based upn the best recent studies in the English nguage, is intent upon familiarizing ne reader in the first place with the leas discussed by Paul. Problems of text and language are touched upon, whenever the exact understanding of Paul's words requires, but they are also very deliberately kept within these limits. Greek words are at times given in transliteration, obviously in an attempt to encourage the reader to use his Greek New Testament as a starting point. The author, without uncritically adopting it, refers occasionally to Philipps' translation as representing one possibility of interpretation.

In his Introduction, Dr. Morris holds that both letters are genuine and that they probably were written in brief succession to the same church. He rejects as mistaken C. F. Baur's denial of their genuineness, as also Harnack's view according to which the letters were written to two different groups in the congregation, one Jewish Christian and the other Gentile Christian. In succinct and clear manner both the positions of the critics and the author's reasons for not accepting them are stated. According to Dr. Morris there is no ground for seeing discrepancies between the eschatology of the two documents. Those who held such view did either misunderstand Paul or exaggerate the significance of shifting emphases.

The author's position might be characterized as conservative, but the truth is simply that it reflects the consensus of Anglo-Saxon exegesis of Thessalonians. The two great eschatological passages (1 Thess. 4:13-5:3 and 2 Thess. 2:1-12) are treated with circumspection and a broad knowledge of the various views set forth by scholars on these hotly debated topics. At this point it becomes also evident, however, that the author's purpose is strictly confined to presenting the exact meaning of the words and phrases used by Paul, *i.e.*, to let the Scripture speak for itself. He refrains from relating the text to contemporary controversies, and from pointing out the significance the words of Paul have for the reader. In this respect, too, Dr. Morris remains in the whole of the Anglo-Saxon tradition, for with the possible exception of William Neil (Moffatt N. T. Commentaries) all the great interpreters of Thessalonians have shown the same restraint.

This respect for the spiritual judgment of the reader, who is to make his own application of the text, is certainly in line with the theological axiom that everybody must be free to be illumined directly by the Word of God. The exegete, accordingly, must consider himself a purely technical helper, who assists the reader of the Bible in the task of translating the foreign text and its historical implication into the intellectual idiom of the reader. I wonder, however, whether such a narrowly circumscribed definition of the task of exegesis, which was not shared by the Reformers, will not unnecessarily limit the circle of the potential users of such a commentary. The number of those Christians who are capable of directly perceiving the spiritual message of the Biblical books, is by no means a large one. The normal thing is that by sharing the spiritual experiences of others we, too, grow in the spiritual life. This reviewer for one had wished to receive a few glimpses of the light which the revered author has on the topics treated by the Apostle in these letters.

LETTERS TO THE JOURNAL

SIRS:

May I add a note to the contribution of the Rev. Leonard Sweetman entitled, " 'Foreign' Missions," and published in the June issue of the *Journal?*

The idea of the "interrelationship between the 'older' and the 'younger' churches" certainly needs discussion. And Sweetman has served us well with his biblically orientated piece.

Sweetman points out correctly, it seems to me, that we must exercise "real cooperation, not feigned cooperation." Further, we must "respect the Church of Jesus Christ gathered in Japan" or anywhere else. And we must be "willing to listen to her and be taught by her." With all this I agree. The fact is that God's missionary instrument in the world is *the Church* and wherever we find that Church we had better recognize her and help her if she so requests.

But how can we best help her? How must we help her?

May we serve in an obsequious way? May we just stand by, "willing to listen to her and be taught by her" in *every instance?* Or must we be strong in the faith "once and for all delivered," determined to communicate this faith to these Churches either by bringing it to them initially or by bringing it to

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them again, that is, bringing them back to it?

What I am really asking is: What place do Church Confessions play in this business of "channeling our work into the structure of existing churches?" Do we leave our Confessions at home or do we take them with us, displaying them at every hand and, as much as possible and as soon as possible, share them with out brothers and sisters in Christ in other lands?

Am I correct in saying that "real cooperation" demands:

1. That the men sent to work out this cooperation be men with deep and strong convictions regarding the present validity and dynamic character of the Reformed and Presbyterian Church Confessions; men who believe that these Confessions are summaries of what God has revealed in His Holy Word and that they define specifically the Christ according to the Scriptures?

2. That one of the first tasks of such men is to develop such confessional consciousness and loyalty in the midst of the Churches to which they are sent?

3. That the Churches thus established and/or re-established be encouraged to communicate something of this rich heritage to the young churches that are being born as a result of *their* home mission efforts?

Thank you again for a *Journal* that continues to live.

Sincerely,
CLARENCE VAN ENS

SIRS:

Re: "The Mind if Safety," *The Reformed Journal*, April, 1957

In presenting evidence to prove the existence of the Mind of Safety in the Christian Reformed Church Dr. Henry Stob refers to the Christian textbook program. No, he does not claim that the Christian textbook program *per se* is evidence that the Mind of Safety exists. But he reports hearing voices which urge the production of books which would prevent students from meeting views at variance with their own.

I would like to assure Dr. Stob that there is no one working closely with the Christian textbook program who is so obsessed by the Mind of Safety. The voices are those of straw-men. On the other hand, it is true that the safety principle is respected and observed in the Christian textbook program. Surely Dr. Stob would not want it otherwise.

Sincerely Yours,
SIDNEY J. DYKSTRA

SIRS:

I am sailing on a ship which left Livorno, Italy, this morning and is proceeding down the Mediterranean along the coast of Corsica and Sardinia to the Straits of Gilbraltar to Casablanca, Morocco and then back "home" to New York.

After re-reading the record of Paul's voyage to Rome and the dramatic story of his shipwreck in these waters at Malta in preparation for the Bible study in the daily devotional service tomorrow, I finally got around to reading the May issue of *The Reformed Journal*. On the cover of my copy is stamped the notice, "This is your last copy unless you renew now."

After reading especially the masterful article by Mr. DeKoster, the very fascinating and enlightening article by my former classmate, Dr. John T. Daling and the not-so-pleasant but significant account in "Pages from the Past," I do not hesitate to renew my subscription. Please find my check enclosed . . . .

Cordially yours,
WM. A. SWETS
Chaplain, USNR

SIRS:

. . . I am enjoying the magazine very much as its contents are very stimulating and lead one not to be too complacent about our sojourn upon earth. Could it be possible for an article to be written by one of our experienced men in the field of evangelization on the practical approach in reaching the unsaved? For my part I need direction in that and would like to be properly informed in that respect.

The Lord continue to work with all of you and bless your efforts in using the printed word.

Your fellow Christian,
WILBERT WICHERS
Brandenton, Fla.

SIRS:

We know that your interest in the development of Calvinistic scholarship is of the kind that seeks action as well as words. This letter is being sent to you in order to inform you and the readers of the *Journal* about a relatively young organization formed for the advancement of Calvinistic scholarship.

Organized in April, 1955, by a group of Calvinist scholars who felt that existing scholarly and professional organizations of which they were members did not provide adequate scope for their interests in scholarship, the Guild is designed to be a supplementary organization of a professional and scholarly nature. It has, at present, fifty-five members. Its generic aim as stated in its constitution is the encouragement of a scholarly exploration and development of Calvinism (or Augustinian Christianity) as a *Weltanschauung* by means of studies on topics of the widest interest. Specifically, the Guild has held scholarly seminars and has published a bi-monthly Guild *Newsletter* and a Directory of Guild members and their research interests. There have been in addition such projects as the *Checklist of Calvin Studies* 1945-1955.

Regular Guild membership is open to any Calvinist holding a graduate degree. Affiliate (non-voting) membership is open to any interested person.

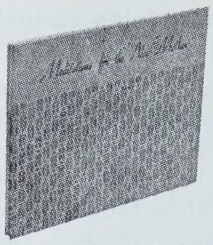
We hope that many readers of *The Reformed Journal* will take this opportunity to further their own efforts in Calvinistic scholarship and to aid their brethren in our common task.

The 1957 seminars of the Guild will be held August 27 and 28 at Calvin College. For further information write to:

Dr. S. Vander Weele, Secretary
Guild of Calvinist Scholars
1220 Fuller Ave., S.E.
Grand Rapids 6, Michigan

Your inquiries will receive prompt attention.

Sincerely yours,
Carl G. Kromminga
For the Guild of Calvinist Scholars



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